

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0603

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write in strong support of Colorado Governor Jared Polis' request for an expedited federal emergency declaration in response to the severe mudslides and heavy storms along Interstate 70 (I-70) in Glenwood Canyon, Colorado. We strongly encourage you to accelerate a federal response and assist Governor Polis to safely reopen I-70 and address this disaster.

I-70 serves as the major transportation artery for the Front Range and the Western Slope and is traveled by thousands of motorists each day. According to initial reports, about four inches of rain have fallen in the area over the last several days—which is almost double the amount of rain for the area during the entire month of July. Some areas of the interstate are still covered by ten feet of mud and a timeline for clean-up is still unknown.

Over the weekend, more than a hundred motorists were stranded overnight on I-70 after mudslides blocked its usage and thirty individuals took refuge overnight in a tunnel near the Hanging Lake exit. Thankfully, no one was reported missing or injured.

However, according to Colorado Department of Transportation officials, sections of I-70 could remain closed for weeks. If approved, this declaration request will make vital assistance available from the Federal Emergency Management Agency for clean-up, repairs, and other necessary emergency efforts.

Governor Polis and local officials informed us that the severity and magnitude of the situation is beyond the response capabilities of the state and local governments. We respectfully urge you to approve the Governor's federal disaster declaration request and help coordinate an effective Federal response. Each day of additional highway closure results in significant economic harm to communities and businesses in the West that rely on I-70 as the only major thoroughfare for tourism, travel, and the transportation of goods and services.

We stand prepared to assist you in any way possible to ensure prompt evaluation of this request. Please do not hesitate to reach out to our offices with any questions.

Sincerely,

Representative Lauren Boebert
Representative Ed Perlmutter
Representative Jason Crow
Representative Joe Neguse
Representative Diana DeGette
Representative Ken Buck
Representative Doug Lamborn